

Message Text

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FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

FOLLOWING REPEAT OTTAWA 4697 ACTION SECSTATE DTD 15 DEC

QTE

UNCLAS OTTAWA 4697

POUCHED ALL CANADIANS CONSULATES INFO

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TAGS: PFOR, CA, PINT

SUBJ: COMMONS REACTION TO AMBASSADOR'S PRESS COMMENTS

1. FOLLOWING IS UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF EXCHANGES IN
HOUSE OF COMMONS REGARDING AMBASSADOR PORTER'S COMMENTS
TO PRESS:

BEGIN QUOTE:

MR. TOM COSSITT (LEEDS): MR. SPEAKER, I RISE ON A MATTER
OF URGENT AND PRESSING NECESSITY CONCERNING CANADA'S CON-
SISTENT WORSENING RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND
ARISING PARTICULARLY CONCERNING THE STATEMENT MADE DURING
THE WEEKEND BY U.S. AMBASSADOR WILLIAM PORTER WITH REGARD
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TO THE NECESSITY OF SOMETHING BEING DONE ABOUT THIS UN-
FORTUNATE SITUATION. I WOULD THEREFORE MOVE, SECONDED BY
MY HON. FRIEND FROM PARRY SOUND-MUSKOKA: THAT THE HOUSE
REGRETS THE NECESSITY OF AMERICAN AMBASSADOR WILLIAM PORTER

HAVING TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES; THAT THE HOUSE REGRETS THE ANTI-AMERICAN STATEMENTS MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER ON SUCH OCCASIONS AS HIS VISIT TO THE SOVIET UNION AND ALSO ON RETURN FROM HIS LAST VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES; THAT THE HOUSE FURTHER REGRETS CERTAIN OF THE GOVERNMENT'S ANTI-AMERICAN POLICIES AND, FINALLY, THE HOUSE REQUEST IMMEDIATE STEPS BE TAKEN TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH OUR CLOSEST NEIGHBOUR AND LARGEST TRADING PARTNER BY PUTTING AN END TO OUR PRESENT FOREIGN POLICY TOWARD THE UNITED STATES, DOMINATED BY IVAN HEAD AND THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE, AND BY PLACING IT MORE PROPERLY UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE ENTIRE CABINET AND IN THE HANDS OF A COMPETENT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

MR. SPEAKER: THE MOTION CANNOT BE PUT WITHOUT THE UNANIMOUS CONSENT OF THE HOUSE. IS THERE SUCH CONSENT?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: NO.

HON. ROBERT L. STANFIELD (LEADER OF OPPOSITION):
MR. SPEAKER, IN THE ABSENCE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS I SHOULD LIKE TO ASK THE PRIME MINISTER ABOUT THE STATEMENT MADE BY AMBASSADOR PORTER SUGGESTING THAT OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE UNITED STATES HAVE DETERIORATED DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS AND AN ATMOSPHERE OF SUSPICION, IF NOT OF HOSTILITY, IS DEVELOPING IN IMPORTANT AMERICAN QUARTERS. DOES THIS COME TO THE PRIME MINISTER AS A SURPRISE, OR DOES THE INFORMATION THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN RECEIVING FROM OUR OWN DIPLOMATIC SERVICE CONFIRM THE VIEWS EXPRESSED BY AMBASSADOR PORTER?

RIGHT HON. P.E. TRUDEAU (PRIME MINISTER): MR. SPEAKER, IT COMES TO ME AS A SURPRISE BOTH AS TO THE SUBSTANCE AND AS TO THE FORM. I HAVE NOT SEEN THE TEXT OF UNCLASSIFIED

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AMBASSADOR PORTER'S STATEMENT AND THEREFORE I SHOULD NOT LIKE TO MAKE ANY FINAL COMMENTS ON IT, BUT I MUST SAY I AM SURPRISED THAT AN EXPERIENCED DIPLOMAT LIKE MR. PORTER WOULD NOT FIND OTHER CHANNELS FOR EXPRESSING VIEWS IF HE THINK THEY ARE RIGHT.

MR. COSSITT: YOU ARE ANTI-AMERICAN, THAT IS WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU.

MR. TURDEAU: THEREFORE, I AM SURPRISED ABOUT THE FORM, AND I REPEAT THAT I HAVE NOT SEEN THE TEXT OF AMBASSADOR PORTER'S STATEMENT. I HOPE I WILL BE SEEING IT FAIRLY SOON. ON THE SUBSTANCE, OF COURSE, WE DO KNOW THERE ARE

PROBLEMS BEING SOLVED BETWEEN OUR COUNTRIES, AND THAT THERE HAVE BEEN, WILL BE AND ARE VARIOUS FORMS OF IRRITANTS THAT WE ARE ALWAYS WORKING TO OVERCOME. ON THE OVER-ALL SUBSTANCE, I THINK THE MOST FAIR ANSWER IS TO SAY I HAVE SEEN PRESIDENT FORD THREE TIMES DURING THE PAST YEAR AND TALKED AT GREAT LENGTH WITH HIM AT THOSE MEETINGS AND AT OTHER TIMES ON THE TELEPHONE. SECRETARY KISSINGER WAS HERE A VERY SHORT WHILE AGO, AND MADE PRIVATE AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO THE EFFECT THAT OUR RELATIONS WERE VERY GOOD. I AM, I CONFESS, SOMEWHAT SURPRISED AT THE TONE OF THE REMARKS, AS REPORTED, OF AMBASSADOR PORTER, AND I MUST SAY THEY DO NOT CORRESPOND TO WHAT EITHER THE PRESIDENT OR SECRETARY KISSINGER HAVE BEEN TELLING ME.

MR. STANFIELD: MR. SPEAKER, I AM SURE WE CAN ALL AGREE ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION. MY QUESTION REALLY WAS BASICALLY WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA HAS BEEN RECEIVING FROM OUR OWN DIPLOMATIC SERVICES IN THE UNITED STATES, AND DOES IT CONFIRM OR REFUTE POSITIVELY, ONE WAY OR OTHER, THE OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY THE AMBASSADOR? IF THE PRIME MINISTER NEEDS TO LOOK INTO THIS MATTER, DOES HE INTEND, EITHER HIMSELF OR THROUGH THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, TO MAKE INQUIRIES OF OUR DIPLOMATIC PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES IN ORDER TO CONFORM OR OTHERWISE THE IMPRESSION THE PRIME MINISTER NOW HAS ABOUT RELATIONS?

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MR. TRUDEAU: MR. SPEAKER, I THOUGHT I HAD ANSWERED THAT IN MY REPLY. IF I CAN BE MORE PRECISE, LET ME SAY I DID TALK TO AMBASSADOR WARREN LAST WEEK, OUR AMBASSADOR IN WASHINGTON, ABOUT OTHER MATTERS AND THIS TYPE OF REMARK DID NOT COME UP. I REPEAT THAT AMBASSADOR PORTER'S REMARKS DO NOT IN ANY WAY REFLECT WHAT I HAVE LEARNED FROM PRESIDENT FORD OR SECRETARY KISSINGER OR FROM OUR OWN AMBASSADOR. THIS DOES NOT MEAN THERE ARE NOT DIFFICULTIES WHICH ARE ARISING ALL THE TIME, SOLUTIONS TO WHICH WE ARE WORKING ON AND ATTEMPTING TO FIND. THE HOUSE KNOWS THAT EVER SINCE THE TWO COUNTRIES HAVE EXISTED THERE HAS BEEN A CONSTANT SERIES OF PROBLEMS WHICH HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED AND SOLVED, AND THAT TO ME IS THE NATURE OF OUR RELATIONS, NOT THE KIND OF RELATIONS THAT AMBASSADOR PORTER IS REPORTED TO HAVE STATED.

MR. DAVIS MAC DONALD (EGMONT): MR. SPEAKER, SINCE THE PRIME MINISTER REFERRED TO THE VIEWS HE HAS RECEIVED FROM PRESIDENT FORD AND SECRETARY KISSINGER HE MAY BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT AMBASSADOR PORTER REFERRED AS MUCH TO THE MEDIA AS TO OTHER ASPECTS OF GOVERNMENT,

PARTICULARLY CONGRESS. I AM WONDERING WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER IS AWARE OF THE FACT THAT THE JOINT ECONOMIC SUB-COMMITTEE ON INTER-AMERICAN AFFAIRS OF THE TWO HOUSES IS MEETING TOMORROW AND WEDNESDAY BASICALLY TO STUDY OUR FOREIGN INVESTMENT REVIEW LEGISLATION, AND WHETHER OR NOT HE IS AWARE THAT THE STAFF HAVE ASKED FOR REPRESENTATIONS FROM OUR GOVERNMENT AND HAVE SO FAR BEEN REFUSED, EVEN THOUGH THERE ARE SOME PROMINENT CANADIAN BUSINESSMEN WHO WILL BE APPEARING OVER THE NEXT FEW DAYS? WILL THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATE WHY THE DECISION WAS TAKEN NOT TO APPEAR TO EXPLAIN THIS IMPORTANT LEGISLATION TO THE UNITED STATES LEGISLATIVE BODY;

RIGHT HON. P.E. TRUDEAU (PRIME MINISTER): MR. SPEAKER, I WAS NOT AWARE OF THIS REQUEST BUT I WILL LOOK AT IT WITH SOME ATTENTION. AS A MATTER OF GENERAL PRINCIPLE, I AM SURE ALL MEMBERS ON ALL SIDES OF THIS HOUSE WILL AGREE THAT IT IS NOT PROPER AT FIRST BLUSH FOR MEMBERS UNCLASSIFIED

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OF THE CANADIAN PUBLIC SERVICE TO APPEAR BEFORE LEGISLATIVE BODIES OF OTHER COUNTRIES.

SOME HON MEMBERS: HEAR, HEAR*

MR. MAC DONALD (EGMONT): MR. SPEAKER, I AM NOT SURE WHETHER THE PRIME MINISTER MEANT TO INDICATE BY THE FINAL PART OF HIS ANSWER THAT THERE WILL BE NO SPOKESMAN THERE TO EXPLAIN THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT POLICY POSITION. I SHOULD LIKE TO ASK A FURTHER QUESTION OF THE PRIME MINISTER IN VIEW OF RECENT REPRESENTATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE OTHER PLACE STUDYING CANADIAN-US RELATIONS, SPECIFICALLY BY FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO CANADA SCHAEZEL, IN RESPECT OF THE CANADIAN-US MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON TRADE AND ECONOMIC AFFAIRS WHICH HAS NOT MET FOR THE PAST FIVE YEARS.

AMBASSADOR SCHAEZEL SPECIFICALLY RECOMMENDED THAT THIS COMMITTEE BE REVIVED AS AN IMPORTANT INSTRUMENT TO OVERCOME SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES REFERRED TO BY AMBASSADOR PORTER. CAN THE PRIME MINISTER INDICATE WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT IS GIVING CONSIDERATION TO THIS IMPORTANT COMMITTEE IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO OVERCOME SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES THAT HAVE PRESENTLY BEEN SUGGESTED.

MR. TRUDEAU: ON THE FIRST PART OF THE QUESTION, MR. SPEAKER, WHAT I INTENDED TO CONVEY AND THINK I DID CONVEY IS THAT IF THE UNITED STATES WANT TO KNOW ABOUT OUR POLICIES THE WAY TO KNOW ABOUT THEM IS NOT TO SUMMONS OUR CIVIL SERVANTS IN FRONT OF THEIR CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES. OUR AMBASSADOR IS THERE. THERE ARE CONSTANT MEETINGS AT THE

MINISTERIAL LEVEL BETWEEN CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES. WE, OF COURSE, ARE VERY PREPARED AND DESIROUS TO DEFEND ANY ASPECT OF OUR POLICIES AND TO EXPLAIN THEM TO THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, BUT WE ARE NOT A COLONY OF THE UNITED STATES.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: HEAR, HEAR*

MR. TURDEAU: ON THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE TO WHICH THE HON. MEMBER REFERS, I THINK THIS IS AN INTERESTING SUGGESTION. I WILL SEE WHEN THE LAST MEETING WAS HELD AND UNCLASSIFIED

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WHETHER ANOTHER ONE IS CALLED FOR. IT MAY BE THAT BECAUSE OF THE FREQUENCY OF THE MEETINGS BY MINISTERS OF MANY DEPARTMENTS IN THE PAST SEVERAL YEARS THE COMMITTEE WAS NOT ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. I KNOW THE MINISTER OF ENERGY, MINES AND RESOURCES, THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE, THE MINISTER OF JUSTICE, THE SOLICITOR GENERAL AND THE MINISTERS OF FINANCE HAVE ALL BEEN MEETING AT A FAIRLY FREQUENT PACE. PERHAPS IT WAS NOT NECESSARY TO HAVE THIS CONTINUING COMMITTEE MEET.

MR. MAC DONALD (EGMONT): MR. SPEAKER, JUST TO BE CLEAR TO THE PRIME MINISTER WITH REGARD TO THIS JOINT ECONOMIC SUB-COMMITTEE THAT IS MEETING TOMORROW AND WEDNESDAY, THE REQUEST WAS MADE THROUGH THE REGULAR DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN WASHINGTON THROUGH OUR EMBASSY. THE EMBASSY OFFICIALS THERE DID NOT OFFER EITHER TO ADVISE THE NAMES OF ANYONE OR SUGGEST IN WHAT WAY WE MIGHT BE ADEQUATELY REPRESENTED. PERHAPS THE PRIME MINISTER SHOULD LOOK INTO THAT IN ORDER THAT WE CAN EFFECTIVELY EXPLAIN THIS NEW POLICY INITIATIVE TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT.

MR. SPEAKER: ORDER, PLEASE.

MR. EDWARD BROADBENT (OSHAWA-WHITBY): MR. SPEAKER, MY QUESTION IS FOR THE PRIME MINISTER. SINCE THE REMARKS MADE BY AMBASSADOR PORTER WERE NOT IN PRING BUT APPARENTLY WERE DELIBERATELY MADE WITHOUT A TEXT BEFORE SOME SENIOR JOURNALISTS IN CANADA AND THAT THEREFORE THE PRIME MINISTER WILL NOT BE ABLE TO CHECK THE TEXT, I SHOULD LIKE TO ASK THE PRIME MINISTER, SINCE PRETTY WELL ALL THE PEOPLE AT THIS CONFERENCE WITH THE AMBASSADOR ARE IN AGREEMENT CONCERNING WHAT HE SAID OR IS ALLEGED TO HAVE SAID, WHETHER HE AND THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA WOULD MAKE CLEAR TO THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT THAT WE DO NOT ACCEPT AS APPROPRIATE AMBASSADORIAL ACTIVITY EXPLICIT CRITICISM MADE INTERNALLY OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: HEAR, HEAR*

RIGHT HON. P.E. TRUDEAU (PRIME MINISTER): YES,
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MR. SPEAKER; THE DIFFICULTY IS AS STATED BY THE LEADER OF THE NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY THAT I DO NOT HAVE THE EXACT TEXT. I CAN ONLY ASSUME THAT SOME OF THE THINGS ALLEGED TO HAVE BEEN SAID IF SAID WERE MEANT TO BE STATED PERSONALLY AS AN OPINION OF THE AMBASSADOR. CERTAINLY HE WAS NOT SPEAKING AS THE AMBASSADOR. SOME OF THE QUOTATIONS ATTRIBUTED TO HIM PARTICULARLY AS THEY CONCERN PROVINCIAL POLITICS CERTAINLY ARE BEYOND THE ACCEPTABLE BOUNDS WITHIN WHICH AN AMBASSADOR SHOULD STAY. I AM SURE THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT WOULD AGREE WITH THIS, BUT ONCE AGAIN THE WHOLE CASE IS BASED ON REPORTS WHICH I HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO VERIFY. I WOULD LIKE TO ADD THAT WORD OF CAUTION. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT AMBASSADOR PORTER HIMSELF WILL WANT TO DENY SOME OF THE STATEMENTS WHICH HAVE BEEN ALLEGED OR PUT IN HIS MOUTH.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: HEAR, HEAR*

MR. BROADBENT: MR. SPEAKER SINCE THE AMBASSADOR APPARENTLY TOOK PAINS TO SAY TO SOME JOURNALISTS AS THEY WERE LEAVING THE MEETING THAT THEY WERE FREE TO COMMENT EITHER IN THE WRITTEN MEDIA, ON TELEVISION OR THROUGH OTHER FORMS, IT SEEMS TO BE THE DELIBERATE POLICY OF THE U.S. GOVERNMENT AT THIS TIME FOR THE AMBASSADOR TO MAKE SUCH A STATEMENT AND IT SEEMS EXTRAORDINARY THAT SUCH AN EXPERIENCED MAN WOULD SIMPLY EXPRESS A PERSONAL VIEW IN SUCH A SERIOUS AREA. I WOULD LIKE TO REPEAT IN A SENSE THE FIRST QUESTION TO THE PRIME MINISTER TO CONFIRM IF THIS IS THE OFFICIAL U.S. POLICY AND, IF IT IS SO, WOULD HE MAKE CLEAR THAT IT IS UNACCEPTABLE TO CANADA?

MR. TRUDEAU: STATED IN THAT FORM, THE QUESTION IS HYPOTHETICAL, BUT I WILL TRY TO ANSWER IT NONETHELESS BY REPEATING MY EARLIER STATEMENT. I KNOW FROM PRESIDENT FORD AND FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER THAT THEY CONSIDER THEY HAVE GOOD RELATIONS WITH CANADA. SECRETARY KISSINGER PUBLICLY STATED HERE THAT THERE IS NO COUNTRY WHICH THEY HAVE CLOSER TIES AND BETTER COMMUNICATIONS THAN CANADA.

MR. BALDWIN: THAT IS WHEN THE SWITCH WAS OPEN.
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MR. TRUDEAU: HE ALSO SAID, "I CONSIDER OUR RELATIONSHIP TO BE VERY HEALTHY". THIS IS ENOUGH FOR ME, AND IF AMBASSADOR PORTER HAS NEWS TO CONVEY, IT IS JUST POSSIBLE THAT HE SHOULD BE CONVEYING THEM TO HIS OWN

GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN IN THIS PARTICULAR WAY.

MR. BROADBENT: SINCE THE REPUTATION OF THE NEW
AMBASSADOR, WHO WILL BE COMING TO CANADA BEFORE
LONG, IS, FROM THE CANADIAN POINT OF VIEW, ONE ABOUT WHICH
WE SHOULD BE EVEN MORE APPREHENSIVE THAN ABOUT THAT OF THE
PRESENT U.S. AMBASSADOR --

SOME HON. MEMBERS: OH, OH*

MR. BROADBENT: -- AND I SAY THAT WITH CARE -- HIS
REPUTATION IN MAKING STATEMENTS ABOUT THE INTERNAL
AFFAIRS OF OTHER COUNTRIES -- I WOULD LIKE THE PRIME MINISTER
TO MAKE IT CLEAR, NOT ONLY TO THE PRESENT U.S. AMBASSADOR
BUT TO THE FUTURE U.S. AMBASSADOR, THAT THAT KIND OF BEHAVIOUR
IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE IN CANADA.

MR. BALDWIN: AFTER HE HAS HEARD YOU, HE MIGHT
NOT COME. END QUOTE.
PORTER UNQUOTE INGERSOLL

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